

ROD & *Custom*

what's new in
DRAGSTERS
see page 34

Wisconsin's Red Wagon
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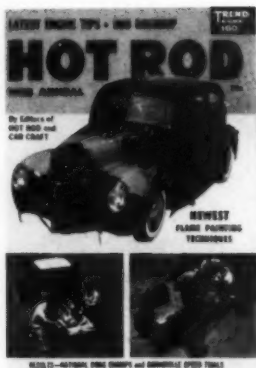
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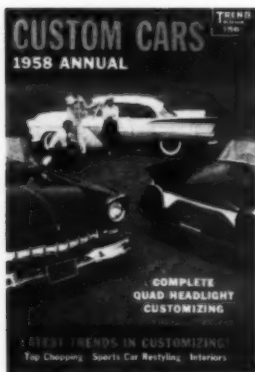
**1958
HOT ROD
ANNUAL**

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- **PICTORIAL ROD ROUNDUP**

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Wild flame jobs, scallops, striping — none of these fads will last out the year. For an insight to real trend-setting restyling, check next month's Cover Custom.

A special treat for our March readers:

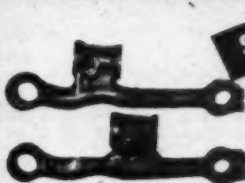
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LOWERING

There are many ways to lower the front of your car. The heating of the coils — the cutting of the coils — but if you want perfect stock ride, the support kit is the only way that does not change the steering geometry. These kits can be installed by anyone with a few hand tools. Instructions are in the kit. If your car is not listed on this sheet, please send for prices.

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	*1949 to 1956	**2	34.95
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	1957	2	69.95
	1958	2	69.95
PONTIAC	*1949 to 1950	**2	34.95
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	1958	2	69.95
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All year models marked thus (*) should also have dropped steering arms installed in conjunction with the lowering supports to insure correct steering geometry. Dropped steering arms are priced at \$18.00 per pair.

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In this month's

ROBERT E. PETERSEN
SPENCER MURRAY
LYNN WINELAND
A. M. BENEDICT
W. C. KING

publisher
editor
graphics
advertising dir.
advertising mgr.

FEATURES

Under close scrutiny this month is an oft-neglected, but basically good, car. Here are 8 pages of...

PLYMOUTH PICTORIAL..... 12

Depicted on our cover this month is a preview of light trucks of the future. Artist Billings'...

TREND SETTING PICKUP..... 24

So, Calif. isn't the only go-fast section of the country; they fly up north, too, evidenced by...

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Backed by a forest of lodgepole pine deep in Oregon, Rod & Custom Magazine's pickups pause during their tour of the great Pacific Northwest. Readers in Oregon and Washington had asked to see the famed Dream Truck, so nothing remained for us but to show it to them.

Another Example of **DOING** with Rod & Custom

Rod & Custom, oldest magazine in its field, *still* leads the pack in bringing you the latest customizing trends, top-notch hop up information, and the best rods and customs in the country.

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the starting line

IT ISN'T VERY OFTEN that a publication has the opportunity to get in on the ground floor of a brand new hobby, but such has been our good fortune with the development of tiny cars weighing a scant 75 lbs., yet large enough to carry full size adults around in mighty swift style. Our initial report turned up in last year's November issue and since that time we've had what amounts to a month-by-month description about development of the sport. And this issue is no exception, since this time we're bringing you the first word of a new car in the field and the first instalment on construction of *The Hustler* — R & C's own project manned by the same staff that whipped up the Dream Truck and the yet-to-be-finished 'Bird.

The thing is this; this magazine, first, last and always, is put together each month with you, the reader, foremost in thought. If you don't like to see a page or two devoted to these under-100 lb. machines, just say so. If you are interested, write in too — for you dictate our policies. But either way, give us the word. Do we keep on with the tiny, *for-all-ages* cars, or don't we?

A very disturbing factor is beginning to creep into the running of car shows — the local one-dayers as well as the big, week-long events. Seems as though certain people are making it increasingly difficult for show promoters to display top-quality show cars — both rods and customs — without the car owners being guaranteed a trophy even before the show opens. The "we won't bring our cars unless we get a trophy" boys, unfortunately, own the more radical cars so the show organizers are up against it, unless they want to risk opening their doors to the public with only semi-radical machinery. Too bad, for almost without exception these cars are professionally built and the owners deserve credit *only* for spending the money to have the work performed. The real hard working enthusiast, who puts in countless hours of back-breaking work, but whose car cannot compare against the shop-built "monsters," seldom gets the credit he so richly deserves. Why? Because only so much money is budgeted by the promoters for trophies, and these trophies go to the phoney who boastfully say, "no trophy — no car."

Watch for this at the next show you attend.

What's the solution for ridding a clean hobby of these virtual vultures? Maybe a reader has an idea. ●

S.M.

ROD & CUSTOM

OUR READERS WRITE—or wrong

GO KARTS

Read and enjoyed your writeup on the Go Karts in the November issue. Became so enthused, in fact, that I sent for one and am glad to report that it is now running. Really storms, too, and can't keep the kids in the neighborhood off of it. Thanks to R & C for unveiling a new product—one that has proven really worthwhile.

Bill Brent
San Diego, Calif.

I have been a regular reader of yours for a number of years but I have never been compelled to write before. But the Go Kart article did it! They look great and I'll be waiting for more news on them. Anyone here in New Jersey interested in starting a Go Kart club? Write me if you are.

Vill Hard
384 Central Ave.,
Newark 3, New Jersey

Sure enjoyed your Go Kart story. Three years ago up here we were "playing" with similar miniature cars using for a course the parking lot of our stadium. Agree with you that they're certainly fun and am going to build another this summer.

Bud Mortenson
Spokane, Wash.

One article on those ridiculous little cars was bad enough, but now I see where you're going to devote a page or two each month on them. Come now, let's stick with hot rodding and customizing and stay away from all this kid stuff.

John Williamson
Omaha, Nebraska

• We'd agree with you, John, if the cars were intended for kids, but Go Karts aren't specifically intended for children. That's the beauty of them and their chief advantage over single-purpose 1/4-midgets. Anyone can fit in (rather, on) a Go Kart regardless of age, size, etc. Not being ridiculously low-g geared for track use, the Go Kart can be used wherever there's pavement—not necessarily in a circle. And it

would take more than what you refer to as a kid to handle a competition Kart on a twisting course. Drop by some time, and see if you think R & C's fuel burning Go Kart is kid stuff!

THE '58 CHEVY

Your artist-writer Lynn Wineland, in the Jan. issue, sure broke tradition in giving his views of the '58 Chevy—but I wholeheartedly agree with him that present-day customizing has been carried beyond the point of ridiculousness, so no matter where it leads from here it couldn't be much worse. In fact, I'm looking for upholstered mufflers, etc., knowing when I find them that the owner of the car will be boastfully telling all who will listen about his inventiveness and worthwhile ideas. Phooey to modern day customs, and let's pray that a past age will return in which we pre-war customizers can find true originality.

Jack Martin

Yakima, Wash.

CAUGHT IN THE ACT



It seems that Barbara Bernstein has stirred up a hornet's nest with her letter against hot rodding in your October issue. I thought it might be of interest that she is my sister's girl friend, and the other day I saw her wearing a SWEAT SHIRT AND LEVIS!! And to top it off, she was driving a street roadster! She about passed out when she found out that I'd seen her—but wait until she learns about this letter.

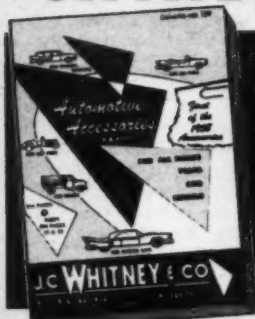
Jim Willows

La Jolla, Calif.

STILL MAD

Many thanks for forwarding me all the letters which you received in re—
(continued)

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OUR READERS WRITE

continued

sponse to my letter in the October edition. It's now evident that you are over-stocked with juvenile readers—why don't the whole bunch of you grow up? Hot rods—phooey! You'll never catch me in one! Keep the letters coming as I'm trying to prove a point with some friends. And don't forget—I'm still mad at you fellows.



Barbara Bernstein La Jolla, Calif.
• Wait until Barb catches sight of the letter accompanying hers. (Aren't we nasty?)

FUNNY STUFF

Hooray for Carl Kohler and his "Half a Dozen Devotees" in the December issue. Laughed until my sides ached.

In all seriousness, Kohler does a masterful job of appealing to true rod and custom enthusiasts, being humorous at the same time. A real fresh approach to automotive reading. Let's have more of him.

George Thomas Chicago, Ill.

• Kohler is presently working away on a couple of stories for near-future issues. If more readers concur and ask for additional pieces, we'll give Carl a new pencil for his birthday and tell him to keep on writin'.

FASTER



I'm writing once again to let you know that my sister and I have built a new kind of car that will suck the pants off of any of you hot rodders. It goes faster than money!

Ancon Noosbush Pueblo, Colorado

ROD & CUSTOM



By GEORGE BURNLEY

On certain occasions the threads of rear axles and axle housings become accidentally damaged during handling or repair. Since the damage is almost always toward the end, only the first few threads are bent or mis-aligned. A simple way to repair these without buying an expensive, hard-to-get, die is this:

Obtain a spare nut of the proper size to fit the damaged thread. Then get a discarded con-rod and remove the bearing alloy. Next, separate the bearing caps and clamp the nut between—grinding off the hex of the nut, if necessary, to make a satisfactory fit. Finally, weld the nut to the assembled con-rod described above and then cut it in half. To repair the threads merely set the con-rod over the good part, bolt on the lower half and run the home-made "die" out past the spoiled threads.

In cases where it is necessary to remove a stud from the cylinder head to install an accessory such as a heater it can be accomplished without removing the head nor chewing the threads off with pipe wrench or vise grip pliers as follows:

Loosen the nut from the stud and bring it flush with the head of the stud. Next, center-punch a mark at any place where the threads of the stud and nut join. Drill a small hole here completely through the nut. Finally drive a nail, rivet or piece of welding rod into the hole to jam the threads and remove the stud with a wrench.

To save the time and nuisance of removing a wheel to replace a hub cap retaining clip, try this:

Drill or cut off the rivet head which held the damaged clip and knock it out. Now get the 1/4" No. 14 self-threading hex-head metal screw and replace the clip with this. Saves riveting.

(continued on p. 62)

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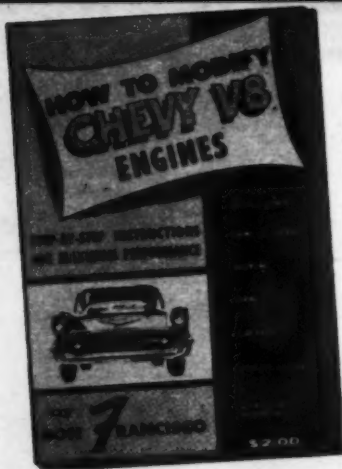
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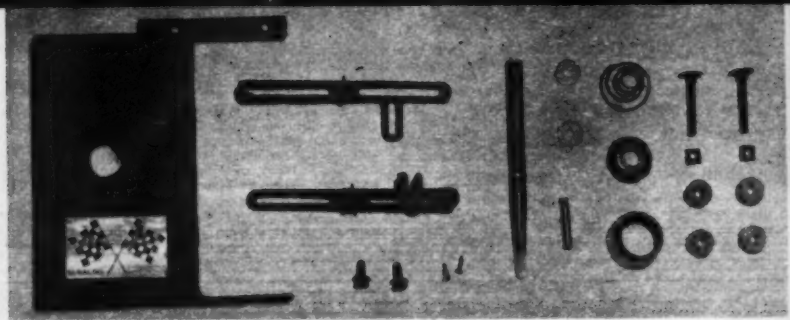
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A book which could be recommended purely on the strength of its author's reputation is this manual for the proper methods for modification of the tops in popularity Chevy V-8. Don Francisco displays his usual talent of meticulous efforts in engine building and the reporting thereof. Because no comparable volume exists for other engines it may be recommended that the general instructions be followed for any hop ups you have in mind. A must for the reference library of novice or expert. Cheap at \$2.00.

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PLYMOUTH

San Jose, Calif., residents were startled when Leroy Heinrich first rolled his black-with-rust-and-gold-scallops paint job into the streets. The car is—or was—a '47 Plymouth with frenched lights, nosed, decked, etc., proving that even an older, stodgy-looking car can be tastefully brought up to date.

PLYMOUTH

pictorial

BY JIM POTTER

a once-lowly Chrysler product reaches new heights up the ladder of popularity

UNTIL THE ADVENT of the 1957 models, the Plymouth was considered a more or less "so-so" car. It didn't look *too* bad, but not too good, either. It didn't perform *too* bad on the highway, but then it wasn't anything to rave about. Handling left much to be desired, the thrill of outstanding acceleration was non-existent, and so forth. But enthusiasts didn't really shy away from the car. There's always been a few custom versions running around, and one or two always managed to put in a showing at the drags. But Virgil Exner dropped a bombshell with the unveiling of the '57's. And so popular did the car become overnight, Plymouth owners with models 3 or 4 years old actually became *proud* that their lowly machine was actually related to the new ones! Such affection has been rarely seen in the auto world.

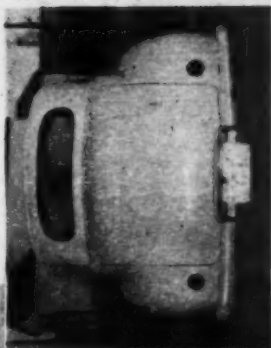
So with Plymouth making a fast climb up the enthusiast's popularity ladder, here is a look-see at what is being done on various models of all ages; and look carefully for all the illustrated modifications were accomplished with a minimum of labor and expense and each *could* be performed in the backyard on your own Plymouth, if you're lucky enough to have one.

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1948

PLYMOUTH



(Moderate lowering, front and rear, and a frenched and molded in grille give Larry E. Bean's '48 Plymouth a new lease on life. From Petaluma, Calif., the custom has been painted light green and features matching Sea foam green and white rolled and pleated upholstery, including rugs. Simplification is the aim desired in the rear-end treat-

ment. With the rear deck smoothed off, Bean installed '53 Oldsmobile 88 taillights just inboard of the rear fender seam molding. Dual exhausts protrude below rear bumper, on either side of the license-guard frame. Besides whitewall tires, wheels are dressed up with '56 Dodge hubcaps.



1949

PLYMOUTH

Jim Conley, of Paramount, Calif., restyled this two-door sedan in good taste. Painted a Sierra gold enamel and striped by Baron and Kelly, the car has been lowered, nosed and decked, and the hood is lowered. A metal pan installed on the underside of the hood keeps the engine dry during rainy weather. Bumper guards have been removed and

chromed exhaust cut-outs protrude from either side. The interior is nicely done in yellow and white tuck and roll Naugahyde upholstery with the carpeting edged in yellow to match. Unique is a radio speaker mounted under the hood forward of the radiator, good perhaps for "talking" the slower drivers over to the right on four-lane highways.

It took 3½ years for Jerry Kravitz of University City, Mo., to complete

'55 Olds 98 side trim pieces. The grille oval has been reworked to

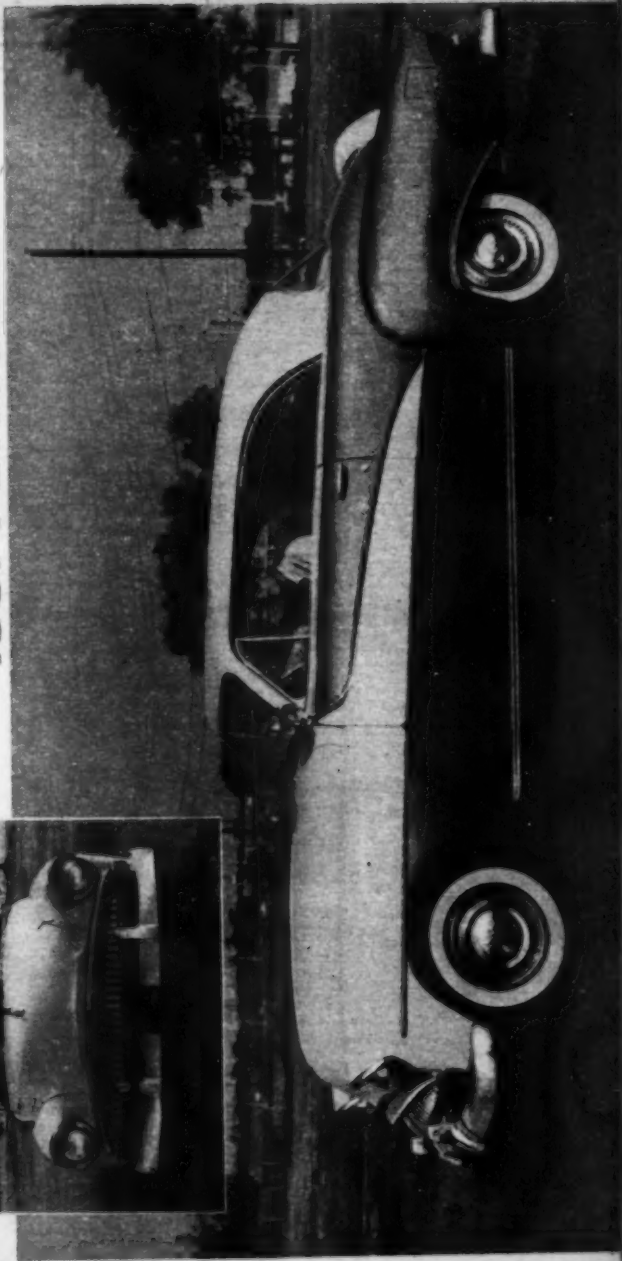
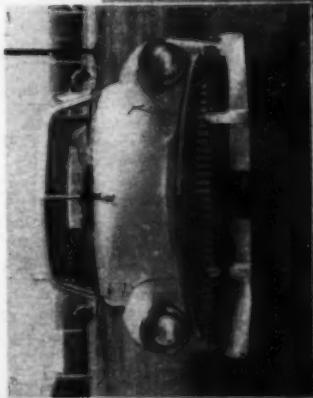
A metal pan installed on the underside of the hood keeps the engine dry during rainy weather. Bumper guards have been removed and

It took 3½ years for Jerry Kravitz of University City, Mo., to complete all of the work on his custom hardtop. Modifications include extended rear fenders, by 18 inches, for a Continental tire installation. Slightly hooded headlights, using '57 Olds rings, are distinctive, as are the

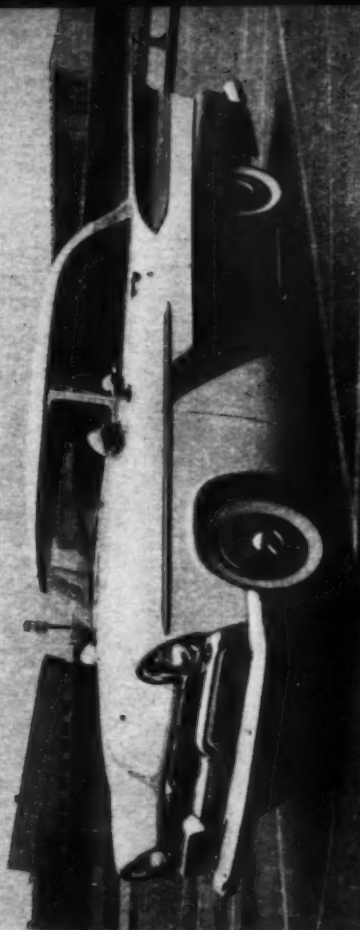
mounted under the hood forward of the radiator, good perhaps for "talking" the slower drivers over to the right on four-lane highways.

'55 Olds 98 side trim pieces. The grille oval has been reworked to receive vertical Merc grille bars. Hubcaps are '56 Plymouth with an old-style English "K" initial painted on as a personalized identification marking which is unique. The car is two-toned in blue and white.

1951 PLYMOUTH



1955 PLYMOUTH

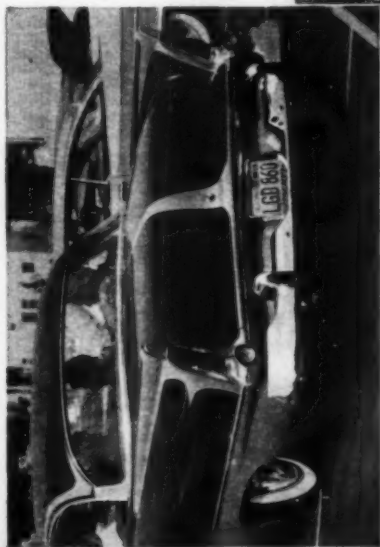


Making a car younger than it really is was accomplished by owner Bud Campbell of Norwalk, Calif., by adding flared fins to the rear fenders of his '55 Plymouth Sport Coupe. Taken from a Golden Hawk Studebaker, the fins were molded onto the rear fenders of the Plymouth. Combination '56 Buick and Plymouth taillights are uniquely different.

Dual radio aerials, instead of being placed on top of the fins, are positioned alongside the taillights, below the fin. And, to give the car a cleaner look, bumper guards were removed, front and rear; the car has been nosed and decked, spotlights added. Another individualistic touch: Buick wire caps with flipper spinners dress up the wheels.

shoveled, the fins were molded onto the rear fenders of the Plymouth. Combination '56 Buick and Plymouth taillights are uniquely different.

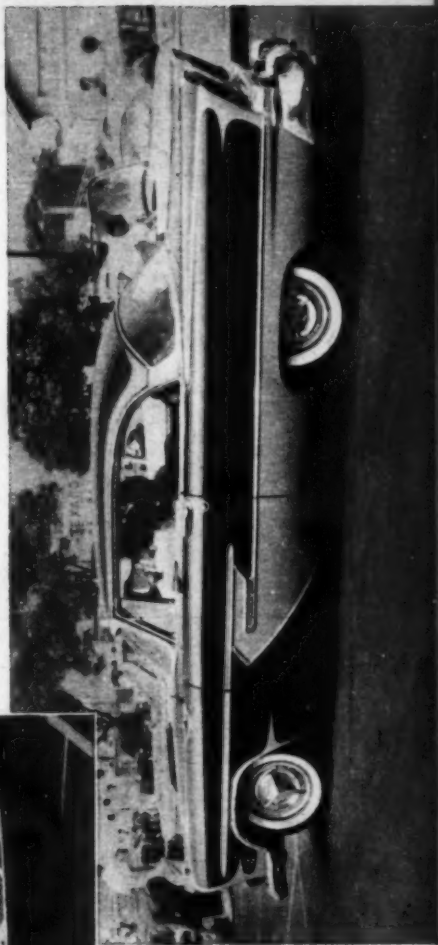
Modifications on this hardtop involve a study in a new approach to painting your custom. Every area of the car has been given special attention when the owner considered the distinctive detailing accomplished by the clever use of scallops. Below the trim line to the rear



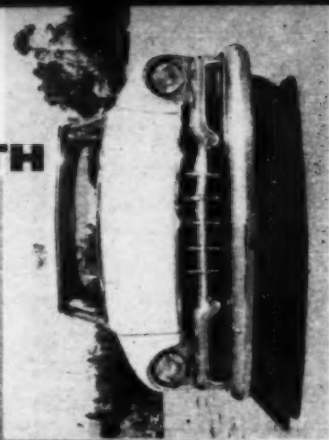
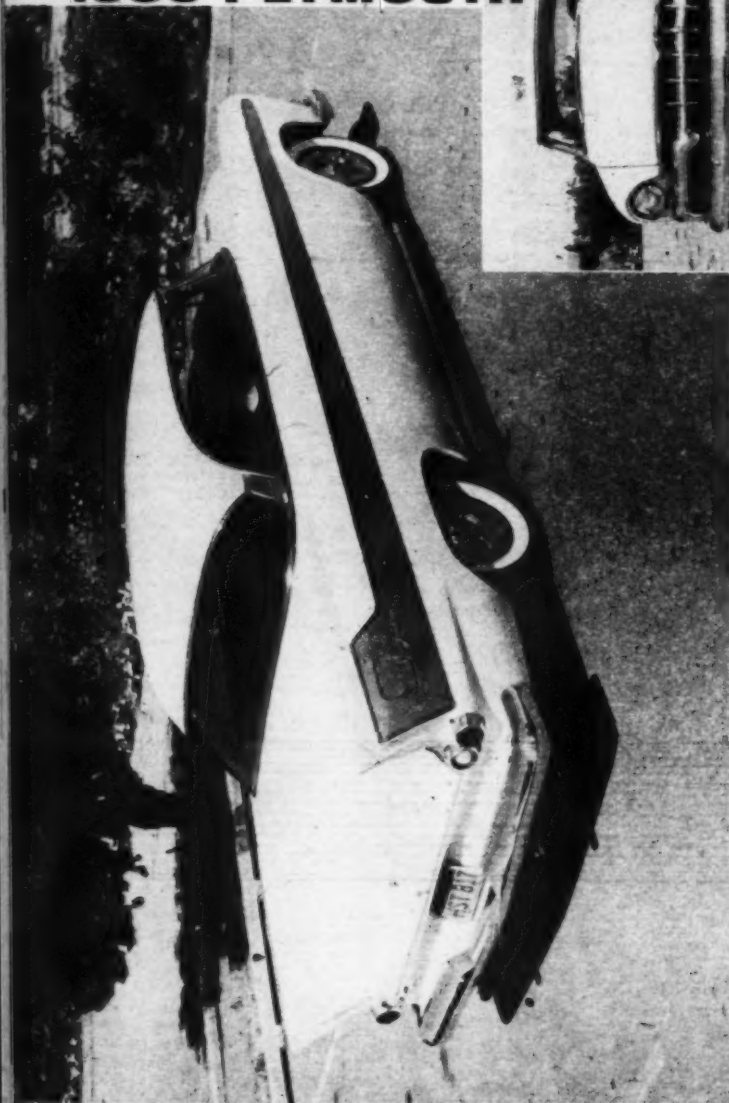
car has been nosed and decked, spotlights added. Another individual-istic touch: Buick wire caps with flipper spinners dress up the wheels.

was the area originally pointed with a lighter color; the owner has tiled the areas together by giving a splash of the same color around the headlights, taillights, and around the edge of the top, and down through the middle of the rear deck. Louvers, late plugs, complete car.

1956 PLYMOUTH



1956 PLYMOUTH



Detailing on this Fury coupe, belonging to Ronnie Dulin of Long Beach, Calif., is excellent. The car features a lowered hood, a grille with side bars shortened eight inches and stock center replaced with a '54 Chevy center. Appearance has been made cleaner by noting and decking and installing electric pushbutton equipment for doors and rear deck. Exhaust cut-outs run full length on either side, while guards are removed from bumpers, front and rear. Cadillac Eldorado taillights are set in re-contoured rear fenders. Fins are raised and peaked. Rear splash pan has been molded in.

Straightening out the lines of the upswept fender fins was the goal in the customizing modifications on this late-model two-door hard-

electric pushbutton equipment for doors and rear deck. Exhaust cut-outs run full length on either side, while guards are removed from bumpers, front and rear. Cadillac Eldorado taillights are set in re-contoured rear fenders. Fins are raised and peaked. Rear splash pan has been molded in.

Straightening out the lines of the upswipe fender fins was the goal in the customizing modifications on this late-model two-door hardtop. To accomplish the job, a molded fiberglass section was grafted onto the existing fenders, executed by the Woodill Fiber Glass Body Corporation of Santa Ana, Calif. Other changes including the re-placement of the stock headlight and parking light units with the smaller dual headlight system, and nesting and decking. Exhaust cut-outs run the full length of the body on either side below doors.

1957 PLYMOUTH



PLATER'S PET

"HEGGIE" Hegenfeffer, owner of the Vallejo (Calif.) Electroplating Co., does a considerable business chroming car parts and accessories. So, as an advertising medium and for his own satisfaction, he thought he'd build a street roadster which would be both road- and show-worthy.

With this in mind he scanned the market for likely iron and kept alert to his customer's talk. He soon heard of an engineless '25 T truck frame sporting a '27 roadster body. He grabbed it up.

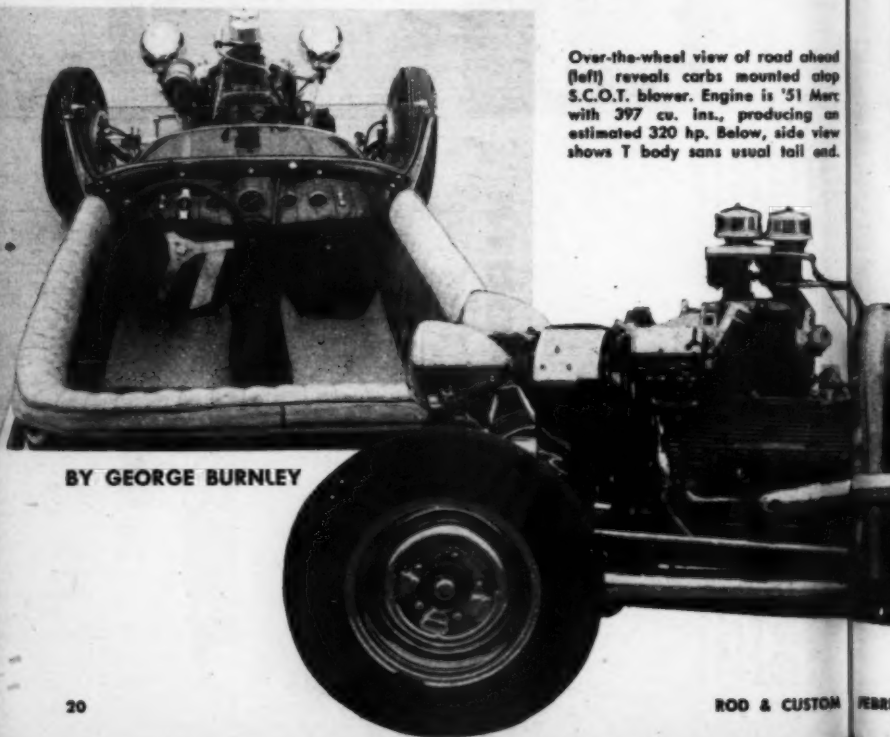
Heggie, and brother-in-law Rick Pilling, pulled what there was of the car apart and, over ensuing months, laboriously reassembled the jewel to its present status as the Plater's Pet.

Naturally, everything that would fit into the chemical tanks was dunked and chromed to a bright lustre. Later, a coral hued lacquer job was blown over the rod, then Joe's Top Shop of Napa stitched up two sets of upholstery with a pleated firewall cover. *Why two?* So the owner doesn't have to stare at the same shade interior day after day. The one set is off-white and rose, while the second is entirely ivory in coloring.

The aforementioned Rick Pilling has recently inherited the fabulous go-toy and can scarcely restrain himself from driving it around town to demonstrate its performance and to exhibit its looks.

A real sassy li'l date baiter, without a doubt. ●

Over-the-wheel view of road ahead (left) reveals carbs mounted atop S.C.O.T. blower. Engine is '51 Merc with 397 cu. in., producing an estimated 320 hp. Below, side view shows T body sans usual tail end.

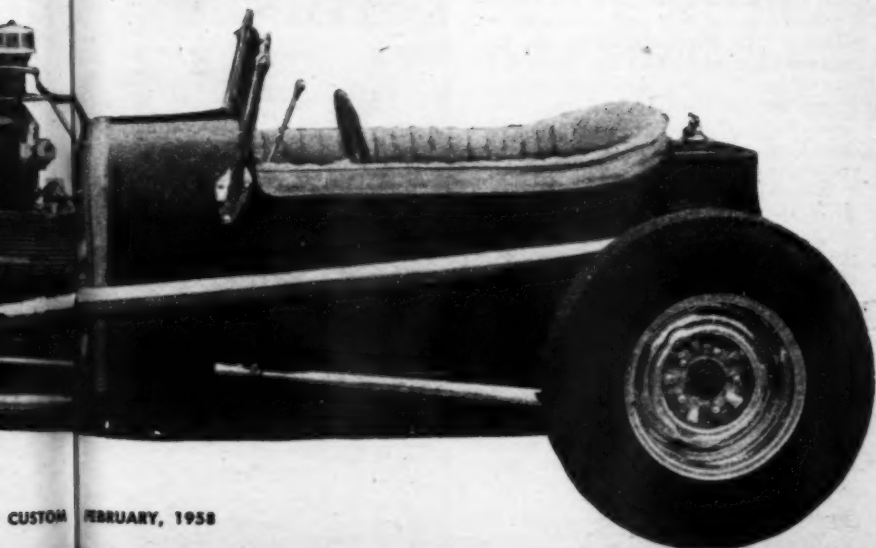
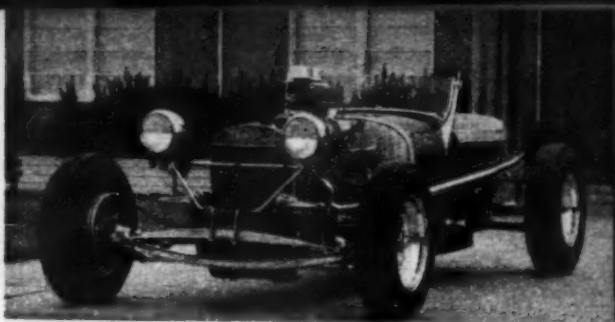


BY GEORGE BURNLEY

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Front suspension is '40 Ford,
'48 spindles mounting 15-in.
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plated. Plaque denotes mem-
bership of owner in well-
known mid-California club.





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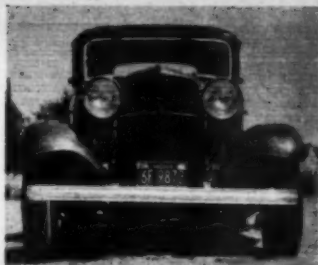
BY PETER SUKALAC

RACING HAS TAKEN its toll of the '32 Ford 3 window coupe. The modified coupe-sedan guys seem to have eyes only for these rare jewels when they build either for the circle or the straightaway. The result has been a gradual extinction of a once plentiful breed.

Dee Wescott, a well known body man from Damascus, Oregon, can testify just how difficult it is to find a 3-window coupe. He had put together many of these jobs for customers, but when he decided to go through a little coupe for himself he learned that the shelves had been picked pretty bare. He finally located a sound body and chassis on an Oregon farm. The body displayed a 25-year collection of nicks and dents and the original upholstery hung in festoons around the interior. Dee, however, had rebuilt tougher looking specimens, so, with confidence the job of restoration was begun.

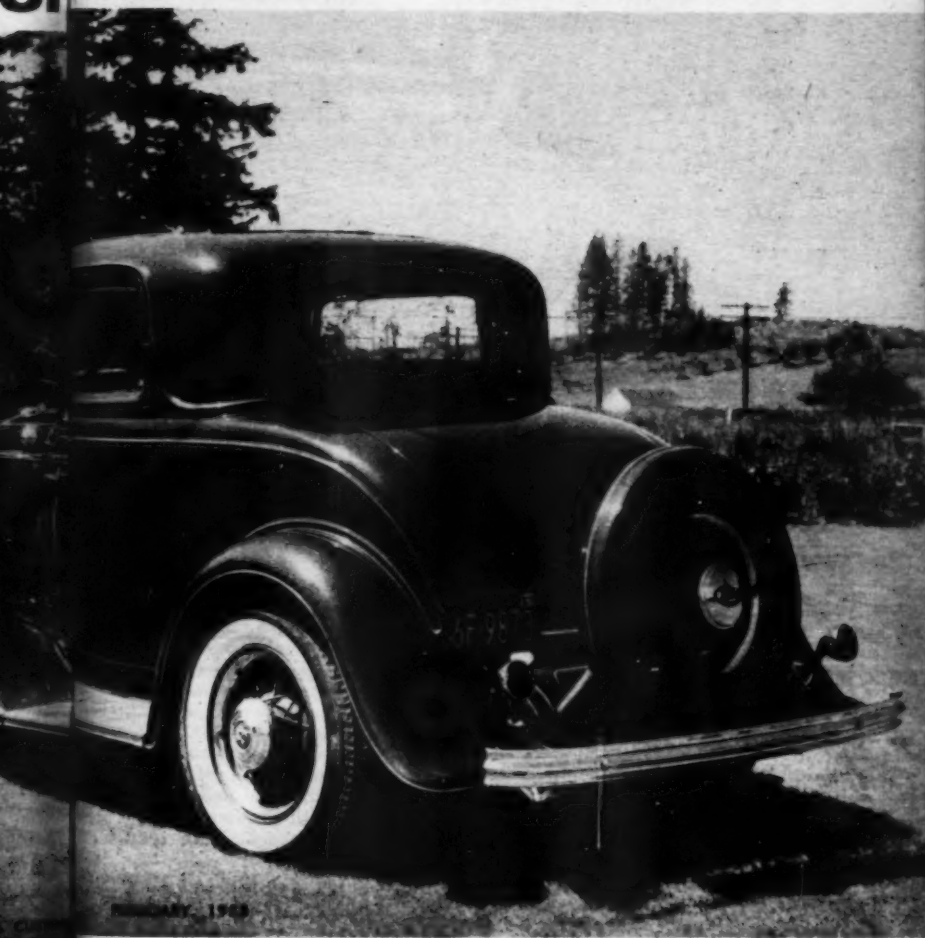
Several weeks later the car emerged from the paint shop resplendent in a shimmering coat of Mandarin Red enamel. The car had been stripped, scraped, sanded and primed. All worn chassis parts were repaired or replaced, a 303 cubic inch Olds engine installed, all controls and instruments reworked, a set of hydraulic brakes installed and the entire interior reupholstered. The exterior was kept as stock appearing as possible to bely the unseen mechanical improvements. The results are, needless to say, highly satisfying. ●





Deuce

as original as they come



FEBRUARY 1969

from a restyler's sketchpad comes this ...



TREND SETTING

ONE OF THE higher ranking finishers in the Rod & Custom Design Contest of a year or so ago was Bruce Billings of Rockford, Illinois, with his entry in the Utility Vehicle category. Not having space available at the time to display the restyling of the Chevrolet Cameo Carrier as depicted by Mr. Billings, we allowed him extra time during which he could add further changes to his design, and to complete two more drawings to add to the single rendering he had originally submitted. The ultimate result is shown herewith, and in color at the base of this month's cover, with Bruce's own description of how the Chevy under discussion could be reworked following the illustrated alterations.

"From both the front and rear view the four-inch top chop is readily apparent. Up front, the Chevy features a floating grille, the now-standard quad headlights and Corvette grille bars.

The rear wheels are partially concealed by accessory-type fender skirts and two exhausts on either side run just beneath the doors.

"The rear bumper consists of a '56 Buick component trimmed to fit between the stock Cameo bumperettes. On the Buick bumper and flanking the license plate are '56 Dodge Custom Royal Lancer tail and backup lights mounted on a specially constructed mounting that also supports the tag.

"The tailgate has been rounded on either side and dechromed entirely. Latches, hidden on the Cameo, are left as is. The tarp is deceiving for it is not the usual canvas material, but a full fiberglass boot that rests on rubber mountings and is hinged at the front for easy lifting, and lock-pins make it removable with little strain. The boot extends over the tailgate then cuts back under to partly conceal the gate and is on the same angle as the fender

Bruce Billings, high-point finisher in R & C's Design Contest, has shown what can be done with the Chevy Cameo Pickup through the medium of full color (see cover) air brush renderings.

extensions. The fenders themselves take a pair of Chrysler Imperial tail-lights with their chrome bases. The entire truck is lowered, five inches in front and six in back in deference to the so-called California Tilt.

"The interior is a mixture of parts from many cars. The bench-type seats have been discarded and replaced (or the stock ones *could* be revamped) with seats from a Thunderbird. Between the split seats is a fiberglass console which
(continued)

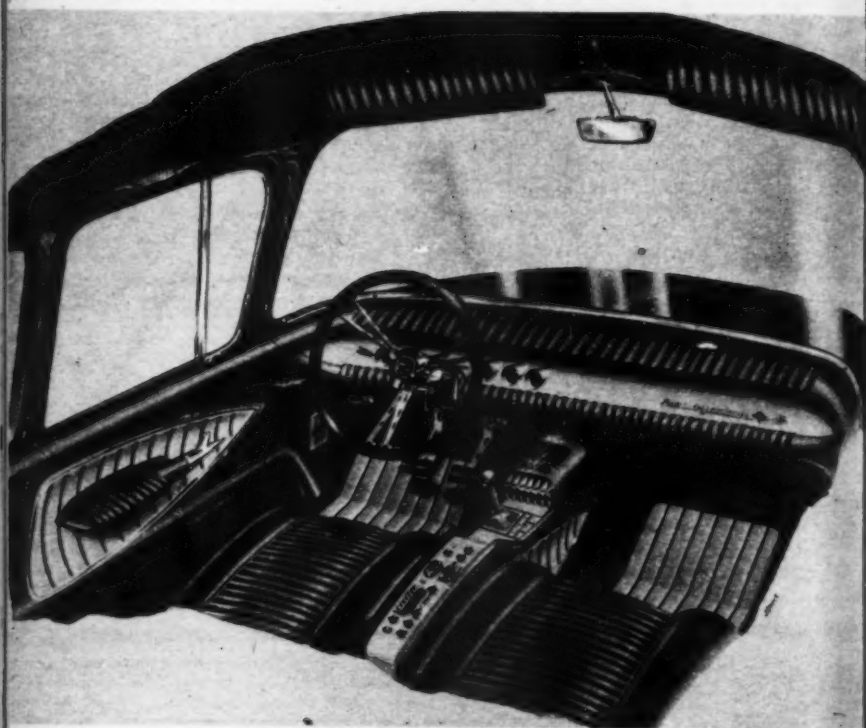
IG PICKUP



Illustrations by Bruce Billings

Most radically altered from stock is the grille/headlight area with Corvette vertical "teeth" set between quad headlamps. The extended rear fenders protrude beyond gate-covering fiberglass boot.

TREND SETTING



Startling interior of the Trend Setting Pickup would not be as complicated to construct as it seems. Dished armrest panels, center console and ribbed panelling around dash are actually fiberglass sections, pre-formed, which are fastened right over the stock body sections. Radically pleated upholstery is right up to date with what Detroit is offering in its cars and should not be long in coming in the new types of deluxe pickup trucks. As script on dash discloses, engine is f.i. Corvette unit, as is the floorshift box (4-speed). Wild use of color in original rendering was artfully done; simulated leather was two-toned red and white with darker-hued carpets. Note padded sun visors.

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PICKUP continued

has on its grey upholstered top all the switches that are generally found on the dash proper. They range from radio and heater controls to wiper switch, power window toggles and power antenna control.

"A Corvette floor shift lever, and plate containing the ash tray, are incorporated and connects with the highly suitable 4-speed Chevy box. Corvette grille bars conceal the radio speaker.

"All the interior modifications are fiberglass panelling which are bolted over stock metal panels. The unpleated areas are painted in flat coloring to minimize reflections.

"The Fuel Injection script and flags are from the '57 Corvette and were

added as an afterthought so onlookers would be made aware of what reposes beneath the hood—a f.i. Corvette V8."

Mr. Billings added a footnote to his correspondence which reads, in part; "The truck will probably be met with either total indifference, mild hatred or flaming demonstrations by readers who fancy themselves styling perfectionists and who perhaps do not care for the dream-car-like interior I have envisioned. However, R & C has always been a trend-setting publication that hasn't yet paled at the sight of real wild conveyances, and I am sure they will forward me all the poison pen letters that the mailman will undoubtedly deliver." ●



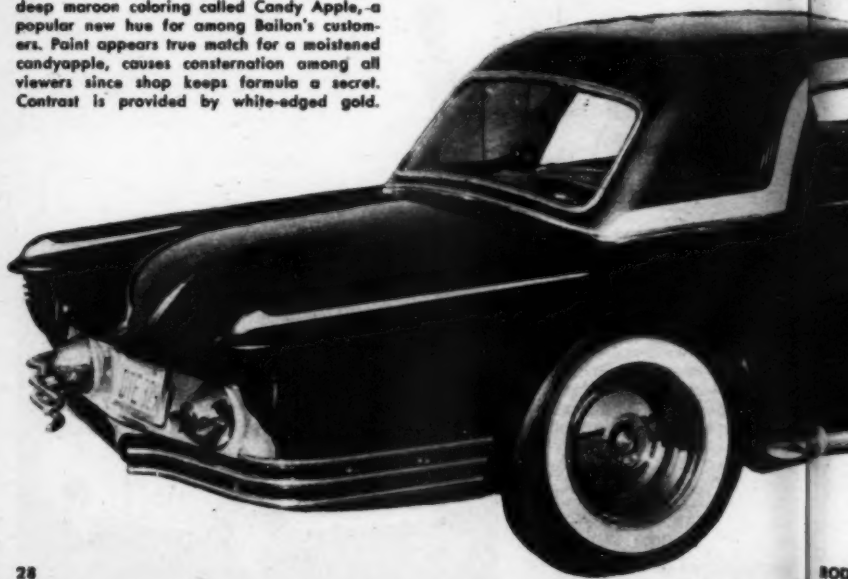
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Drawing above is one of the originals submitted by Billings during the Design Contest, as required by the rules as the judges were curious as to where the entries would place their engines. In this class, though, no engine re-placing was required, though Billings did recommend swap to a f.i. V8. At right is Billings' own Cameo Pickup.





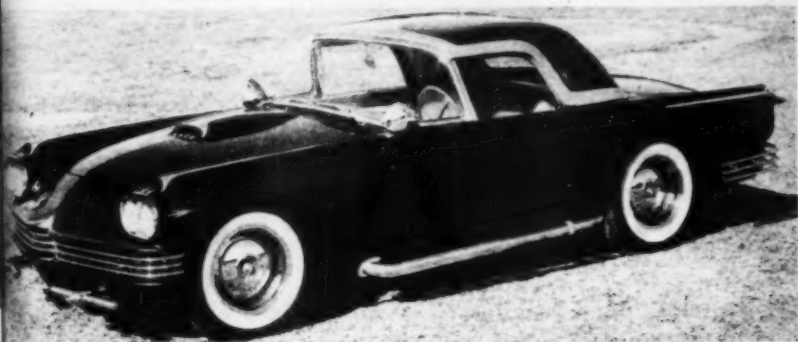
1955 T-Bird gets its name from its unique deep maroon coloring called Candy Apple, a popular new hue for among Bailon's customers. Paint appears true match for a moistened candyapple, causes consternation among all viewers since shop keeps formula a secret. Contrast is provided by white-edged gold.



CANDY 'BIRD

JOE CASTRO, eager custom enthusiast from Fremont, Calif., could scarcely wait to get his hands on a 'Bird just so he could let well-known metalman Joe Bailon go to work on it. Bailon, who maintains perhaps the most highly respected custom emporium in the mid-California area, received the 'Bird shortly after it was hatched and went ahead with the shoot-the-works command.

The result is a fresh approach to 'Bird restyling and is Bailon's contribution to the '58 auto shows throughout California — just about set to get underway as you read this. ●



Odd headlight treatment is a fresh approach to quad lamp problem. Note how fenders had to be widened to receive the units. Use of rod for nerf bar and grille is a recent Bailon trademark as is stepped-size fake header with spur-like gear bracket.



quad-izing a hauler

PART II

last issue we put 4 headlights on this '55 Ford pickup, so let's go 'round back now for style-matching quad taillights

THIRTY DAYS have elapsed since we gave pickup fans a rundown on how to add quad headlights to their pre-'57 Ford $\frac{1}{2}$ -tonners with a minimum of toil, so we are going to assume they've all completed the step-by-step project and get them going on a novel taillight treatment. The rear end treatment on this hauler may not be quite so unique as the front, but we're after matched styling here, rather than gimmicky "customizing for the sake of customizing." We've a definite purpose in using the simple, circular lenses set into what can be termed an unimaginative housing: to tie front and rear styling together, to make the completed vehicle a "homogenous whole" rather than a hodge-podge mess of unrelated doodads.

But, enough for the whys of it, let's light up the torch and get going on the project at hand. Ready? — Begin —



Photos by Barris



A 1954 Buick supplies the taillights in this instance, the simplest style being wanted. The first step is laying the units on cardboard and freehand-drawing an oval line encompassing both lights and leaving about a half-inch margin around the outer edges.



Scissors will cut the cardboard on the scribed line, and also two circles as shown which denote access holes in the finished unit. Steel rod is heated and bent to conform to pattern's outer shape. When cardboard just fits within the ring, ends are welded...

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...then ground smooth. The rod, of course, denotes the edge of the taillight housing; it being far easier to form such a smooth edge in this manner than attempting to hand-shape sheet metal. Next step is cutting a piece of sheet metal to fit within the ring.



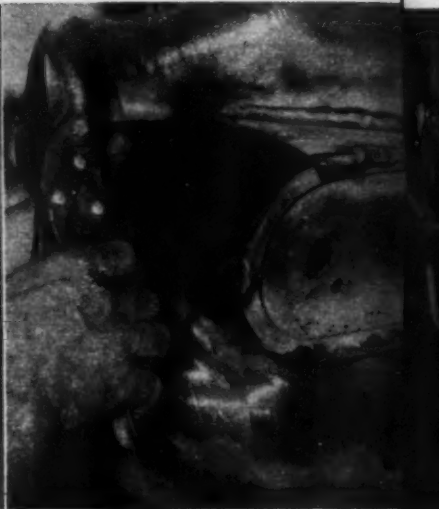
With metal backing tackwelded to ring, and holes cut for lens mounting screws and for passage of wires, unit is held against fender as shown. Measurement will assure that similar unit on opposite fender is in same relative position. With position determined...

(continued)

quad-izing a hauler continued



...access hole is cut into fender with tin-snips, then rod tackwelded to fender. Since unit is to face squarely aft, sheetmetal is necessary to fill gap between rod and fender. Pieces are cut to fit pre-formed paper pattern. Slightly more difficult is shaping...



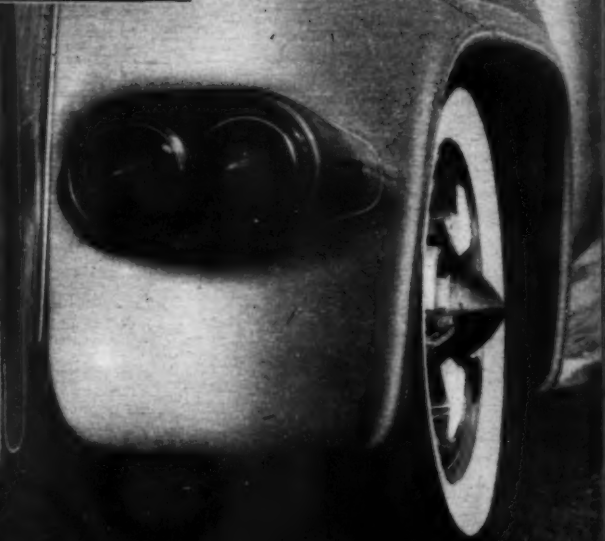
...end piece which must curve as shown. Flat sheet steel can be rough-shaped by bending it around piece of exhaust tubing or other round object at hand. Once trimmed to fit as prescribed, the piece is welded in position and all seams finished off. After...

Completed item is as up-to-date as they come, yet has not required extensive customizing or consumed prodigious amounts of time. Result is as eye-catching as the front and displays careful style-matching overall. Entire truck will be shown in a future issue.

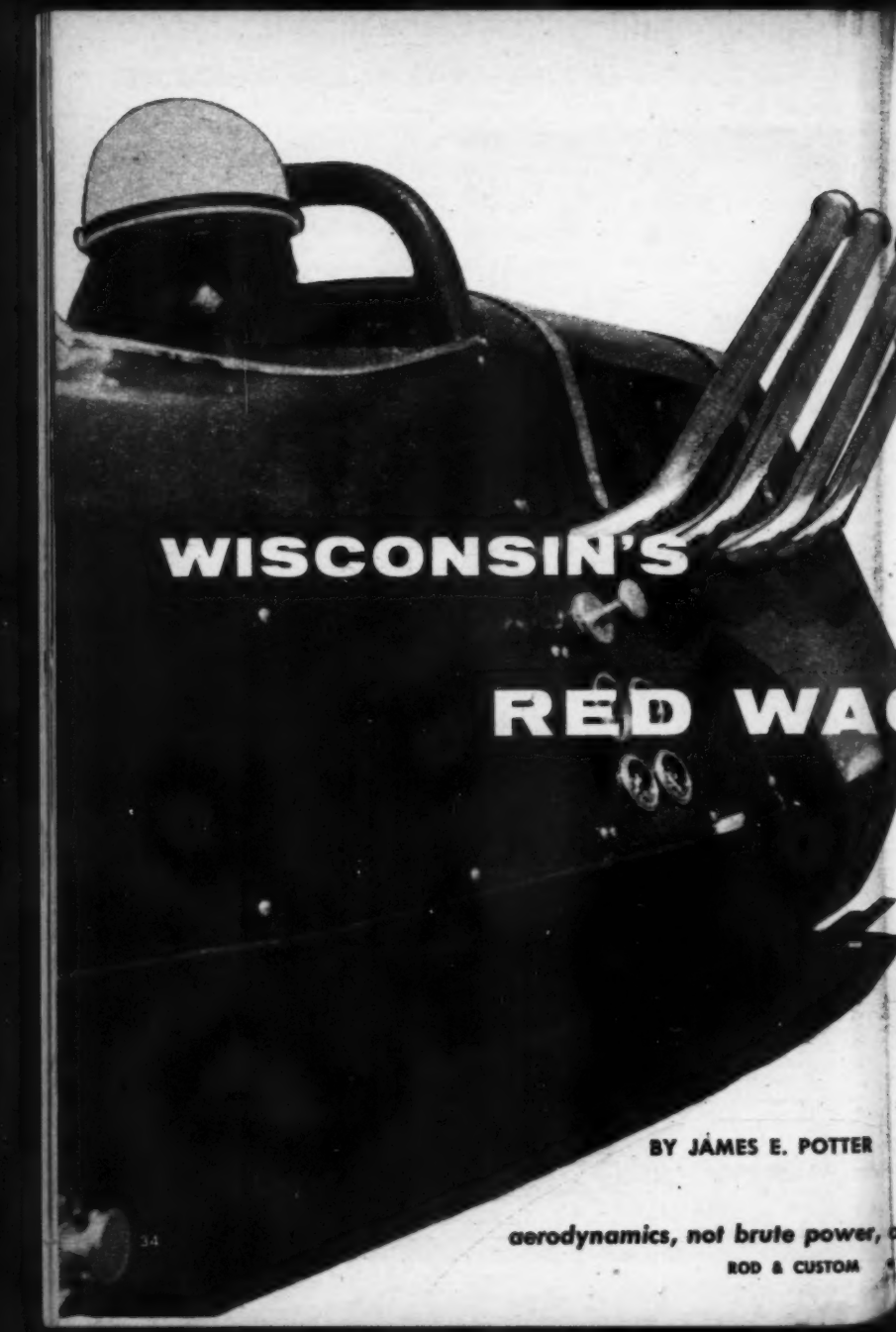




grinding rough welds and working out minor imperfections in smooth surface, caused by metal sparge due to pressure. The grinding and surface work on the car explained previous results of its nature.



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WISCONSIN'S

RED WAGON

BY JAMES E. POTTER

aerodynamics, not brute power, are the

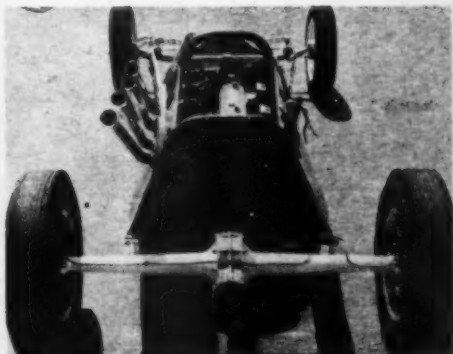
ROD & CUSTOM

EVERYONE HAS their own conceptions of what a drag machine should look like to be a top performer. Master Sergeant Bill Hofer's beautiful red dragster (see cover) is the culmination of 15 years of ideas and experiences with a variety of high-performance cars.

Hofer graduated up from a '54 Corvette, a Chrysler 300 and others. He, along with the "Squires" of Ft. Worth, Texas, combined a collection of interesting components in order to form this aerodynamic threat from Wisconsin (Bill's home state). Basic parts consist of a '32 Ford chassis, a hand-formed aluminum body and — of all things — a six-cylinder Chevy powerplant. With aerodynamics being considered all-important, the narrow 6 was made to fill Hofer's bill. And, as the words on our cover reveal, a speed of 152 mph was attained — 22 miles per hour for each of the six cylinders. ●



A group project, members of the Ft. Worth, Texas, "Squires" turned out en masse to complete the car for the Nationals at Oklahoma City. Driver Jim Williams attained a trap speed of 22 mph per cylinder, or 132 mph; not bad for a six-hole Chevy. Estimated hp output of stovebolt is 250.

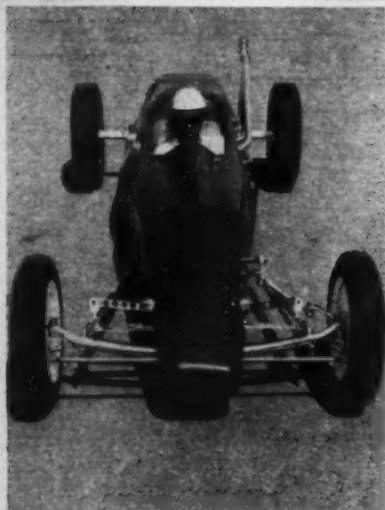
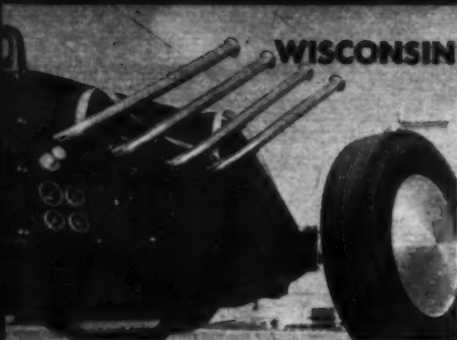


power, are the key to this dragster's success

WISCONSIN'S RED WAGON

continued

Worms-eye-view of car's rear quarter section shows dramatic appearance taken on by the sky-angled chromed exhaust stacks poking out from the 6-in-a-line Chevy powerplant. In this day and age of big V8's it is newsworthy to note that some enthusiasts still prefer the "little in-lines". Instruments are used by "engineer" assistants to tune engine to perfection prior to fast strip trip.

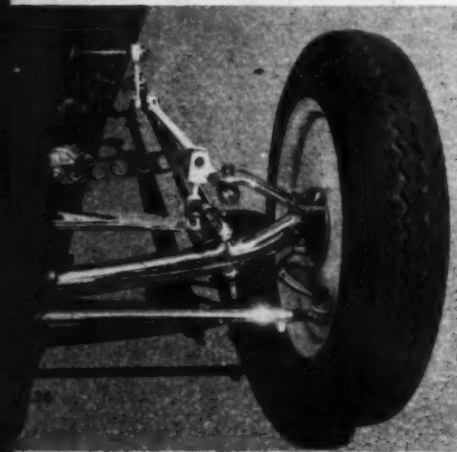


If this issue were equipped with sound, readers would be jamming their fingers into their ears when they came to this photo; taken at the NHRA Nationals last year. Six-cylinder mill emits a terrifying bellow when throttle is depressed. Use of the 6 was decided when group decided on building a narrow car for streamlining.

Steering was robbed from a '32 Ford, box having been altered for central control. Leaf spring front suspension is standard hot rod practice but tube Ford axle, though sought after, is seldom seen anymore. Front wheels are 5.00 x 16 Fords, considerably lightened. Note drilled shock arm to lessen weight.

Engine is much-modified '54 Chevy featuring: Spalding cam, reworked GMC rocker arms, McGurk pistons, Harker manifold with Holley carbs. An Auburn clutch harnesses power which passes to rearend without benefit of a transmission. Aside from being plenty potent, the car is a masterpiece of quality workmanship and careful assembly.

ROD & CUSTOM • FEBRUARY, 1958

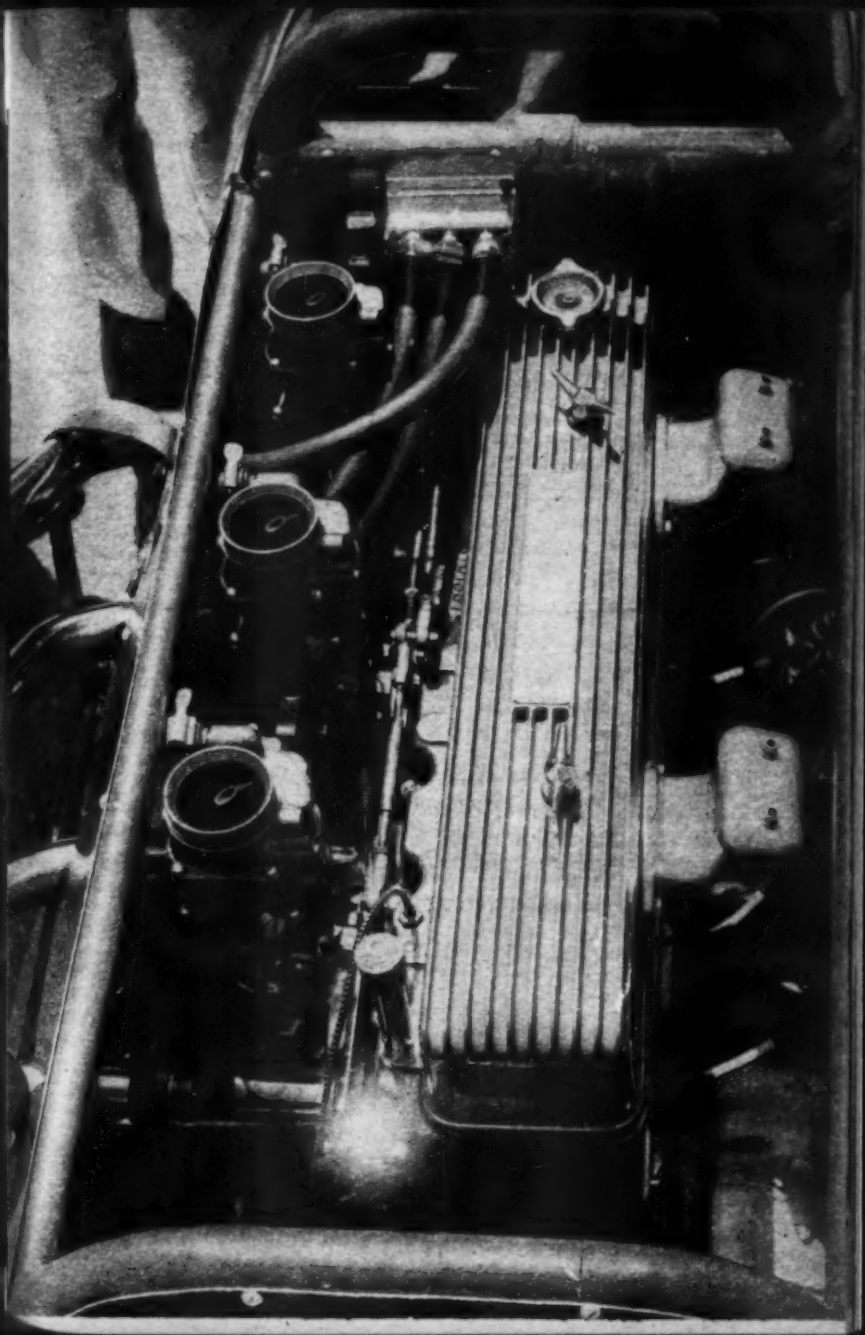


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seven years and it still isn't perfect enough

Seldom chosen as custom bait, Joe Brenner's well-proportioned 4-door '41 Mercury had lain dormant and unkempt for years. But Joe had no sooner hauled it home than its fine lines, hidden under helter-skelter chrome trim, became apparent. The intention was to complete car within a year, but work is still progressing as one alteration seems to lead to another. As evident in photos, shortening side trim on hood added apparent length to the car, as did removal of the doorhandles and frenching the headlights. The interior has received as thorough a going-over as the outside. Valley Custom did all metalwork.





"nearly finished" custom

SEVEN YEARS AGO Joe Brenner spotted this Mercury on a Los Angeles used car lot, and though the body was in horrible shape—and the interior even worse—he was intrigued with the slender nose of the car and decided then and there that something distinctive could be made of it. Despite its beggarly looks the thing ran well, and after being relieved of \$345.00 Joe

drove it home with customizing ideas twirling through his mind.

The planned changes were calculated to require about a year's work but, as is so often the case, one alteration led to another and the project has stretched over the ensuing years.

And to this very day Joe's 4-door remains in its eternal state of "near completion." ●

Photos by Beindorff.



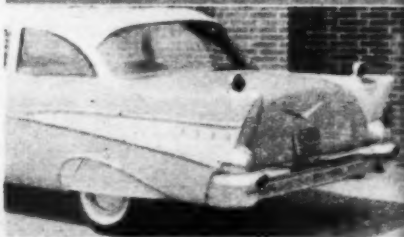
reader's cars of the month



THIS MONTH finds us with two customs instead of the usual single example. Both cars showed such individuality that we couldn't decide which should have first-run preference over the other — so...

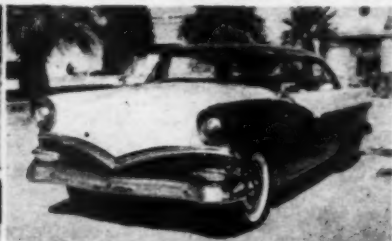
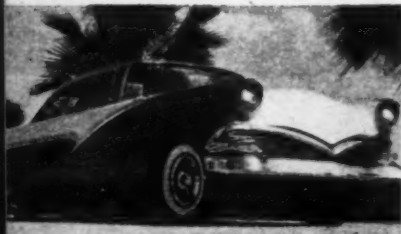
A '57 Chevrolet leads us off, belonging to Don Endres of Indianapolis, Indiana. Owner Don explains that his intentions were to leave the car stock, but a minor traffic hassle opened up an avenue to customizing. As long as minor dents had to be straightened and the areas repainted, why not fill a hole or two, and maybe a seam? Thus the twin hood ridges were formed into small air scoops, handsfull of ornamentation was discarded, and Imperial taillights were perched atop the rear fenders. Mild lowering completed the Hoosier custom.

A Canadian Meteor grille gives Bill Gadd's '56 Ford its look of individuality, with the hood extended down between the "V" shape. Though he hails from West Virginia, Bill's present



stamping grounds are in San Antonio, Texas where the Ford underwent its face-lifting.

Doorhandles have been replaced with an electrical latching device. A mechanical pull-cable concealed inside the car releases the deck latch. Rear fender skirts and a levelling-off lowering job brings the Ford to owner Gadd's idea of a conservative custom. ●





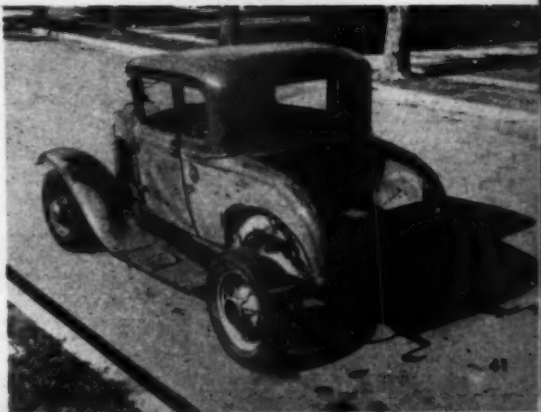
**Cooper's
marvelous
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came back
from the
grave**

an A is FOREVER



photos/lynn

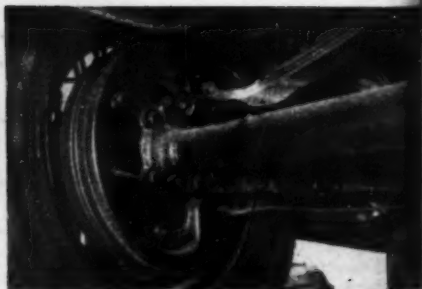
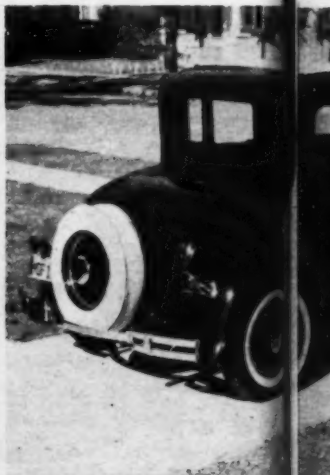
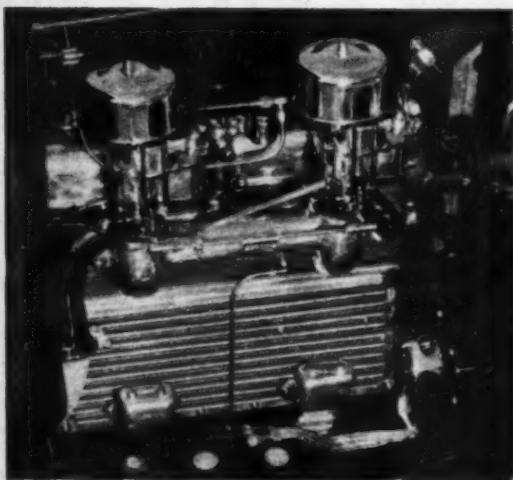
Model A fancier Wes Cooper of Glendale, California is far from being a stranger to the Ford four barrel. A former member of the SCTA Sidewinders, a twenty-year-old hot rod club, Wes and partner Bob Hays did 142 mph in 1949 at El Mirage dry lake with their four-banger roadster. Even today, Wes' love of the A crops up as we see the progress on his latest coupe here and on following pages: The start three years ago is above, two of two years back.



an **A** Is FOREVER

DYED-IN-THE-WOOL historians of the Model A, and those interested only in rejuvenating a once-proud Henry-built to mint condition, would look askance at Wes Cooper's '31 coupe. Not because his car isn't mechanically perfect or absolutely blemish-free, but because the A-bone can hold its own in both the appearance and performance departments even when compared to today's Detroit products. Yep, this 4-banger is no slouch as surprised stop-signal drag fans can attest, and up-to-date improvements in the looks department are representative of what Ford probably would have done had the A been continued for several years beyond its demise in 1931.

But the above is exactly what restorers can't stomach. For them the A has to be downright original in the minutest respect — to and including the A's notable shortcomings and other famed flaws. But to Cooper, the A is practically begging for improvements as the accompanying photographs tend to reveal. ●

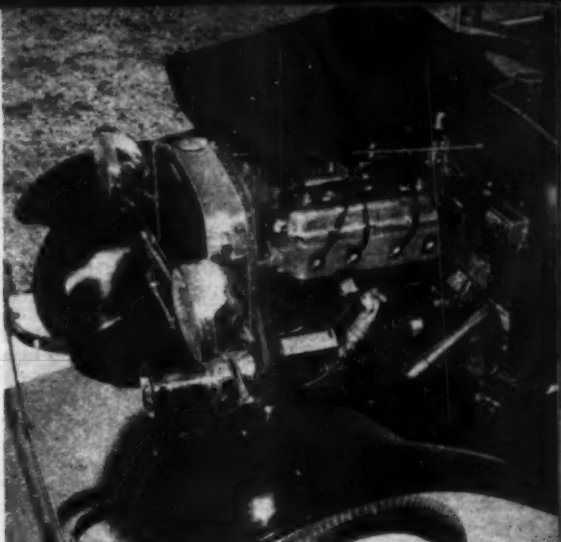


For safety's sake the rod-actuated stoppers were replaced, fore and aft, with hydraulics.

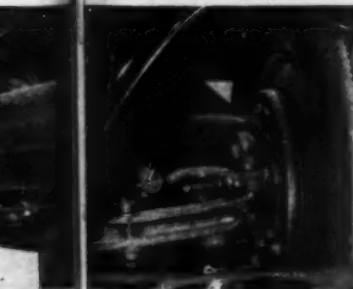
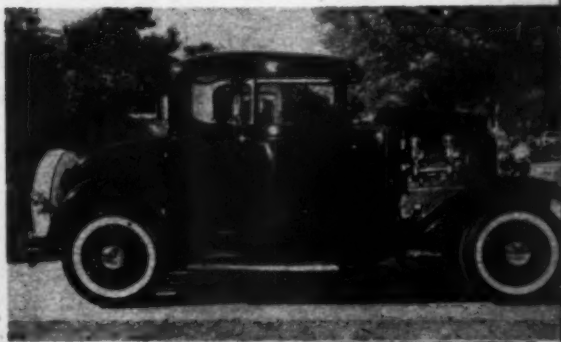
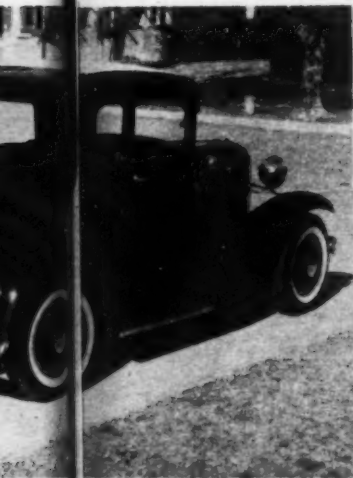
ROD & CUSTOM

continued

A drilled Model C crank turns within this B block which, in turn, has been bored to 4 ins. with a total of 213 cu. ins. Head is a Miller-Schofield (now called Cragar) equipped with late guides and keepers allowing valve rotation for even wear. Model 81 (V8-60) carburetors dump fuel through enlarged ports past big valves moved by a $\frac{3}{4}$ Winfield cam. Late Ford ohv Champion 870 plugs light the potent 4-holer.



Outstanding body restoration is evident in photos at right and below. Of interest to 4-barrel aspirants: Wes Cooper will be back in the news later on a 4-barrel kick. Among other things, he's sectioned a "B" block! Watch for word of hop up items soon to be marketed.



Interior is as clean as the flawless exterior. Naugahyde, black and white, is neatly pleated.

FEBRUARY, 1958

the R&C T'bird gets a taste of the torch



an explanation of the how and why of the

QUERIES FROM the readership regarding the whereabouts of the Thunderbird R & C began to modify two years ago have resulted in this, the first of a series of chapters of not only how, but *why* certain modifications have been made. Vast changes have been wrought, so much that work in one area could not be completed until another item of major proportion was begun in an adjacent section. Now with

work on the forward part of the car nearing completion, revelation can be made of what's been going on.

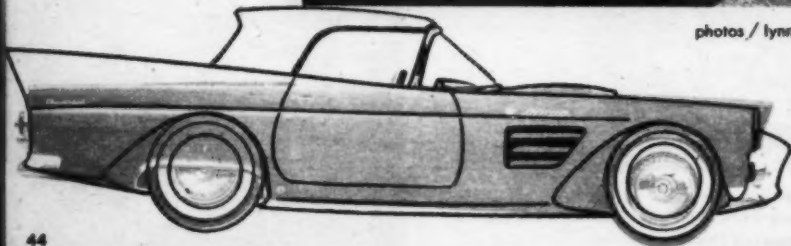
Reader's suggestions have been used as the guiding hand behind all changes in the 'Bird, just as in the now-famous R & C "Dream Truck." A real performance vehicle was the order for the 'Bird and mechanical changes to suspension and motive power have been and are continuing to be made.



The stock T'Bird carburetor air scoop, while functional and necessary in every respect, is too short in length for a number of possible intake manifold combinations and fails to add visual length to the hoodline. Grease-base clay was modeled on the car until the desired shape was attained. Templates of this were made.



photos / lynn



and winds up with a few...



Ruffled FEATHERS

'Bird's new look

Streamlining is a subject that readers hold dear and suggestions for 'Bird work show that readers want to see it in action. The principles of a forthcoming article on "Customizing for Speed and Stability" by one of the world's foremost practicing authorities on streamlining have been used in designing the new 'Bird. The invaluable advice of T. R. Gondert has been followed in plans for getting the most in

performance out of a styling change.

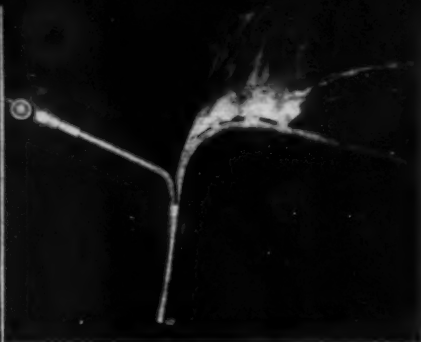
The wedge shape that has become so familiar in aircraft design and has recently shown up in Chrysler experimental cars and in more subdued form on the production models is to be the basic form of the new 'Bird. Reference to the over-printed line drawing on page 44 shows that the wedge is, indeed, just the reverse of the original Thunderbird styling theme.



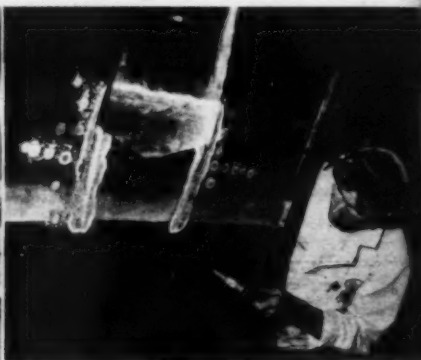
Metelman Tom Noel checks out a template pattern on the car before transferring it to a piece of body metal the same thickness as the hood. This greatly helps reduce warpage.



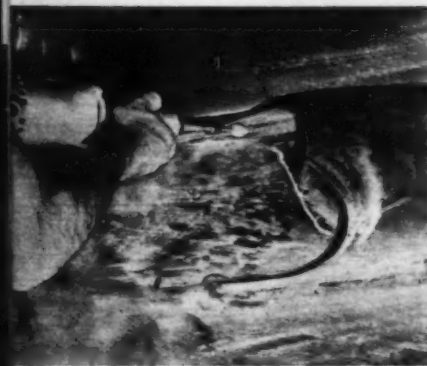
Old scoop is snipped back to tangent of bubble crown before forming new forward section. This will save work later of having to lift low spot in center. Continued next page.



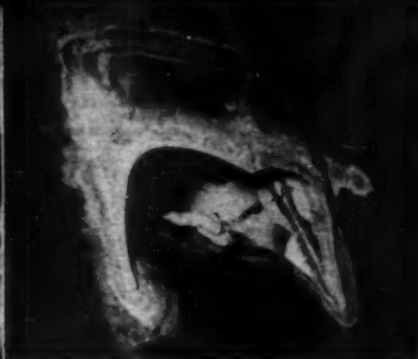
Tom butt-welds new metal to old bubble using small tip and rod, low flame. $\frac{1}{4}$ " rod is formed just under the lip of the new metal to strengthen it and ease forming of...



Hammer-welding the two sections together is easy now. Weld line is heated, hammered and drolled into oblivion. Underside of hood shows first of many shrinks as flattening...



Die grinder gets in tight places to smooth out welds for benefit of close inspection. Wire brush in $\frac{1}{4}$ " drill motor is used to bare all metal before tinning. Cleanliness is next...



...the new leading edge. A little more heat is needed on the $\frac{1}{4}$ " rod, but watch out for distortion of the hood. Dropping the scoop floor is done only after the heavy welding.



...of entire hood panel begins. Right side (worked first for comparison) is now more than 1" lower at center. About 1000 shrinks are in completed hood. Drop is full 2 inches.

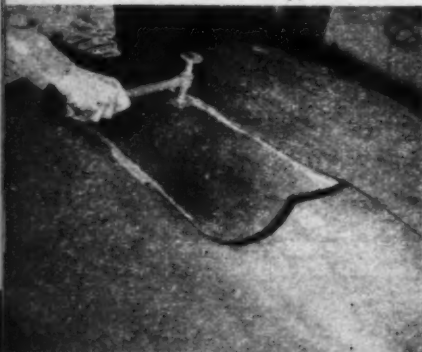


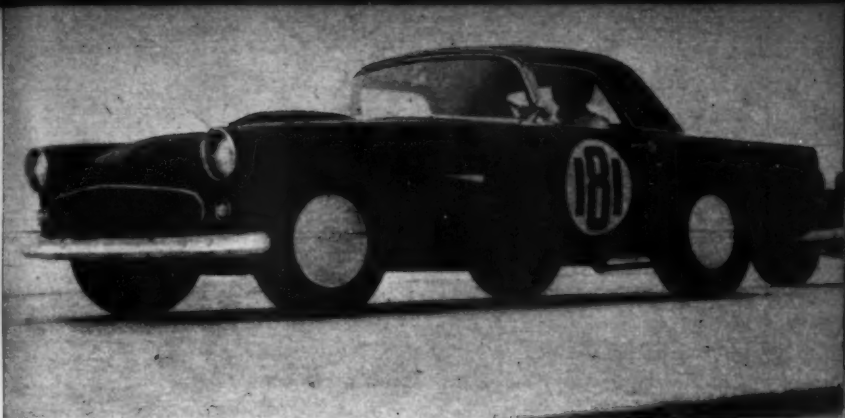
...to Godliness when it comes to making lead stick — and last. Small curved reveal files provide the answer of how to do detail work on tiny fillets. Continued on next page.



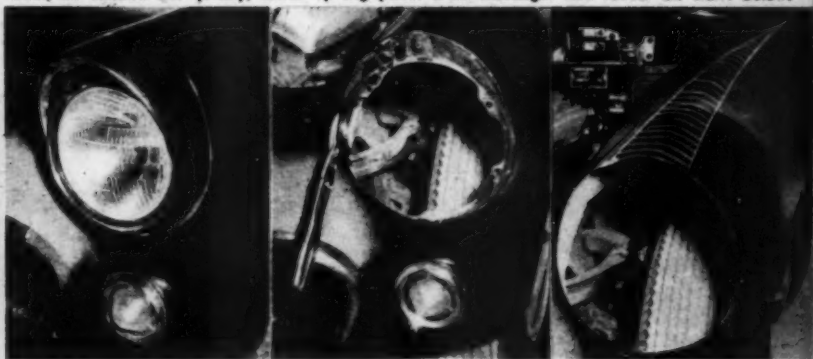
Cross-filing shows up any low spots as Tom gets set to wind up work. Metal-Prep turns lead areas dull prior to prime painting. Plan views shows off new scoop length.

The best laid plans...etc. Modification to the nose of the new "Bird necessitated re-work to the hood in order to carry out the contours begun on the extended nose. The scant few inches of metal unchanged by Tom Noel as well as many he had worked fell prey to the craftsmen of Valley Custom. To flatten the front of the hood area, Jensen and Emory teamed up to trough the metal in front of the scoop, thus increasing the apparent length. More shrink shots below.



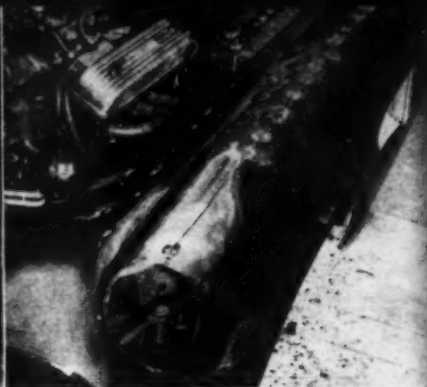
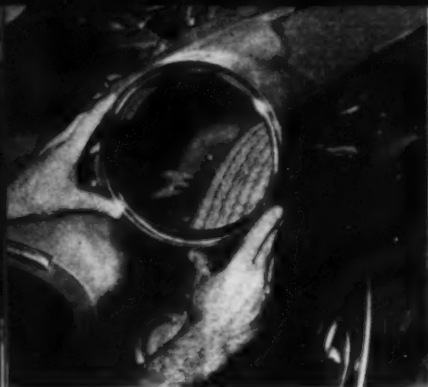


Up on the salt at Bonneville, the 'Bird begins to show the effect of primary changes. Slimness of the side view was accomplished by lowering the front fender line $1\frac{1}{2}$ " at the lights, tapering back to the windshield. The lower body line rolls up a like amount from the door forward. Ducts in forward side panels assure smooth air flow through engine compartment, let exhaust out quickly, break up big panel area. Headlight and fender bit starts below.

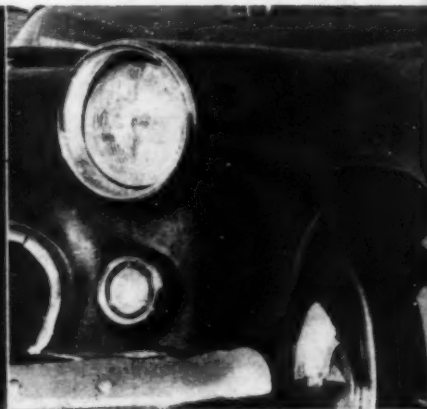


Stock shade casting and light bucket are removed, excess metal snipped out, then fender is pie-sliced in area shown above, right. Adapter rings 3" deep are made at sheet metal shop and fender is folded down to size of rings. Light sits $\frac{1}{2}$ " lower than stock. Continued next page.





Continental Mark II headlight rim is used. Perfectly round, rim complements design of round lightbulb. Fender size and shape are checked, then fender is stitched up full length.



Spring steel clips are used on Mark II to hold chrome rim in place. Same mounting is put in 'Bird's adapters. Selection of rims was not chance—they are perfect mates for parklights.

The look of the new 'Bird is seen at the right as rendered by stylist Lynn Wineland. The elongated proboscis (it's a nose, Herm) is reminiscent of some of Europe's finest and fleetest racing machinery. The how and why of all this follows, next chapter. The evident flatness of the hood as portrayed here, easily shows the reasons for the foregoing work. Dropping the fender line without doing the hood would have made the hoodline appear overly bulbous and out of keeping with the overall theme. Visibility has been helped to a great extent. Rear styling is still to be decided so any suggestions are appreciated. Write Auto Suggestion, c/o Rod & Custom, 5959 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood 28, California. Have you had a hand in it yet?





The adapter rigs are trimmed on the backside to match the shape of the headlight bucket. Mounting is exactly as on stock 'Bird, but lamp is 3" rearward. Adapter is solidly welded.



An enthusiast's curiosity about Pontiac's custom capabilities resulted in this Indian's restyling. Conservative fins are of fiberglass, added atop stock rear fenders. Popular Tiltan Red is hue used, striped in gold.

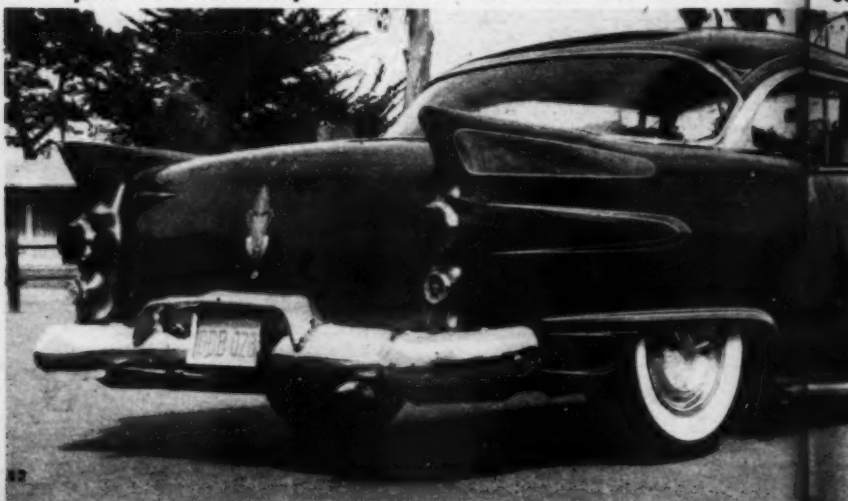


Owner Buddy DePaolo became interested in customizing when his brother acquired a radical car, and since the bug has bitten him he can't seem to stop work on his Pontiac. A chopped top job is planned for near future.



AN OUTSTANDING

pontiac's inherently fine lines are revealed after removal of

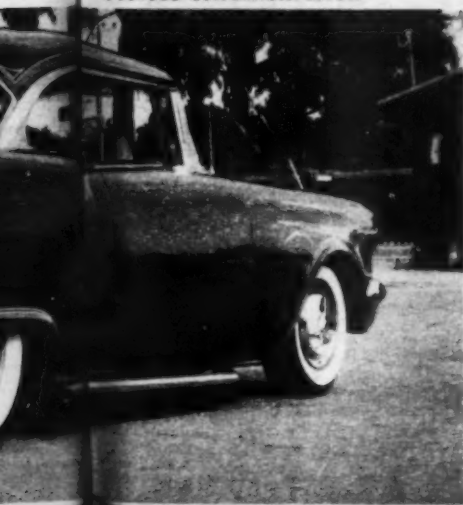




INDIAN

BY GEORGE BURNLEY

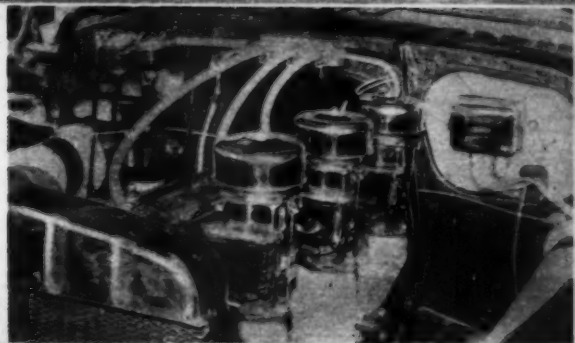
al of **useless ornamentation**



An Olds front bumper allowed use of oval grille cavity, apity filled with expanded metal. Further frontal changes are frenched lights with scoops just above, revamping of hood's leading edge, total chrome removal.



SHOWY CHEVY



Two and one half years and \$3,000 after he started, Dick McCardle wound up with his sure-fire trophy winner. The score so far: five firsts out of five shows. The '30 Chevy incorporates more or less standard modifications, but quality workmanship and attention to details spells the difference. Owner, an electrician by trade, performed all the bodywork himself, leaving the Titian Red paint up to Joe Balion, of Hayward, Calif., and the rolled and pleated interior up to Hall's Top Shop of Oakland. Note "big" engine.

MOD & CUSTOM

the winner! — in five shows out of five

BY BERT GOLDBATH



Modifications to the Showy Chevy are as follows: filled, louvered hood with rounded corners — headlights franchised with '52 Merc rims — '49 Merc grille shell with grille and bumper from a '51 Olds — doors and trunk electrified — '53 Merc teeth in fender scoops — '56 Plymouth Fury sidetrim — tunneled and franchised '49 Ford taillights — bumper bolt heads removed — 1-piece windshield from a '50 Olds — '55 Dodge hubcaps with spinners from '56 Buick — car has been moderately lowered all around — fully modified engine.



FEBRUARY, 1958

CUSTOM



At left above is standard Go Kart from which R & C's "Hustler" will evolve. With power doubled, higher gearing will be permitted thus addition of large rear tires (right) is mandatory. Switch caused excessive California Tilt so frame drop was accomplished by heating rails behind seat back. Racing tires mount on 6" wheels, rather than the five-inchers accompanying the stock kit.

DOUBLING UP

twin-engined for racing!

INSPIRED BY the rash of pint-size adult-type cars that have recently appeared, R & C's staff has turned their talents toward the construction of a potent but under-100 lb. competition machine. Named *The Hustler*, the car evolved from a standard Go Kart kit but incorporates some of the features of the new Fun Rod car, as well as many ideas of our own.

Changes to the kit included revamping of the steering, since with the standard setup the wheels do not steer properly due to the positioning of the steering arms, causing poor traction on corners and swift tire wear. Our alteration also placed the tie rod beneath the floor where it is out of harm's way. Handling has been vastly improved.

It will be noted in comparing *Hustler* with the stock model that the front end has been lowered by welding the spindle supports high on the axle tube, and welding the spindle as high as possible on the king bolt. This lowers the center of gravity sufficiently to assist high speed handling around bends. A full-circle wheel replaces the tiller-like handlegrips of the stocker.

Expensive machine work on some cars had made it possible to unite two engines so they operated as a unit. Precise alignment of the crankshafts and other work resulted in a really potent powerplant, but it was a time-consuming fabrication and one impossible to those not having access to a machine shop. *The Hustler* will be dual-engined, but the 2.3 hp. mills will not be coupled and each will drive its own rear wheel independently of the other. Experimentation along these lines looks promising but since an actual run with the car has not yet been tried, readers are asked to wait until next month for further news. If it works, it will be a real boon to enthusiasts wishing to drive a 42-inch competition machine.

To adequately harness the output of twin engines, a positive braking system is obviously needed. Since each rear wheel is powered independently, each needs its own brake. Visible in an adjoining photo are the two brake drums on *Hustler*, the actual details of which will be unfolded next month. Too, we'll show you how to achieve a balanced braking system which cannot get out of adjustment.

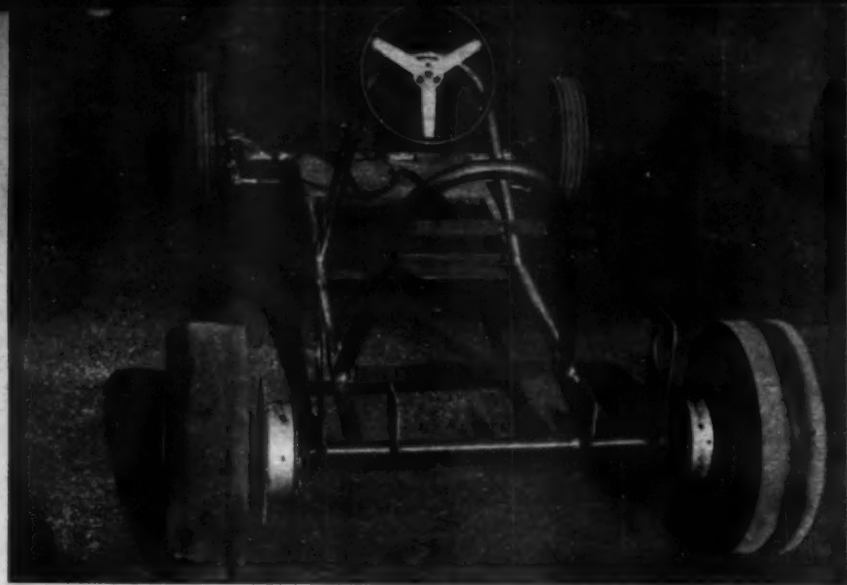
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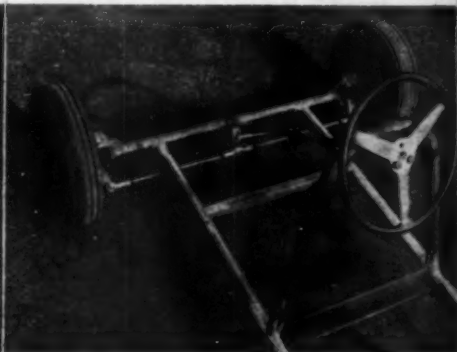
• The doubling up of *Hustler's* output allows us to run 12-inch tires using the stock kit car gearing. At peak engine rpm, something in the neighborhood of 50 mph will be possible. Slicks will be used for cement and asphalt racing with Ascot blocks for dirt.

Tune in next month for further details on the construction of a car for a brand new, swiftly growing sport. ●

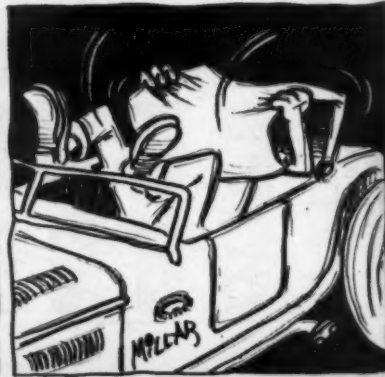
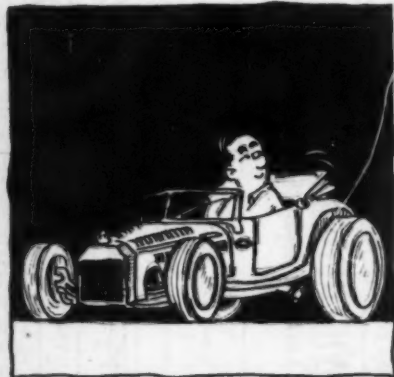
Rear view makes *Hustler* appear bigger than it actually is. Wheelbase remains at 42", complete car will weigh under 100 lbs. The sheetmetal floor of the stock car has been removed to keep weight at a minimum, seat will rest on light angle iron X-members, while driver's feet will rest on 8"-long floor panel. Standard engine mounts have been welded to frame near right rear wheel for mounting of the additional engine.

Photos by Spence

Standard Go Kart steering is adequate for cars with single engine, but more positive tracking is needed above 40 mph. Stock car (at left) has tie rod exposed while *Hustler* (right) has all rods behind axle where they will be safely out of harm's way beneath abbreviated flooring.



ARINCEE



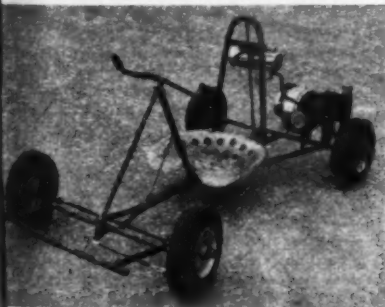
MEET THE FUN ROD



Photos by Spence

...newest addition to the growing numbers of miniature size cars
— for any and all members of the family

IT WAS A safe bet that manufacturers noting the meteoric rise in popularity of the tiny but adult-sized cars would jump into production with varying versions. The first to spring up after those revealed in our November issue, *Wheels Under the Peasants*, is the Fun Rod which is the lightest and simplest operating of the cars available at this writing. Biggest feature of the Fun Rod is the flexibility allowed by the frame which permits the wheels to follow undulations in the surface. This is an especially noteworthy innovation since it makes the cars as useful on dirt as on paved surfaces.



Despite minute size of the 41" wheelbase Fun Rod, 185 lb. sports car driver, Pete Woods, sits on it with ease. Bumper-like bar ahead of wheels is for driver's feet.

For those whose mechanical aptitude leaves something to be desired, news that the little car comes *fully assembled* will be of extreme interest. The purchaser needs only to fill the fuel tank and he's off and running.

One of the motivating forces behind the Fun Rod's unique frame design is well-known sports car handler Pete Woods, shown here astride his brain child. And he'll be the first to admit that these little cars can be a real challenge to one's handling ability.

An odd feature of the Fun Rod is that it has no *throttle*! The carburetor can be pre-set to allow the engine to peak at any speed. An ignition kill button is conveniently located on the steering tiller. Though this unorthodox system might sound a trifle on the dangerous side, quite the opposite is true. The carburetor can be set allowing the engine to run at any speed, whether it be 500 rpm or 6,500. Thus, Dad has only to turn the screw and Junior can't drive beyond his ability. As the youngster's skill grows, Dad can increase the setting. And it is a much more natural action to push a button than to ride herd on one or more foot pedals.

The Fun Rod Company is situated at 8543 Center Street in Paramount, Calif., and their fabulous, fun-providing little cars are a real low \$149.50. ●

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**SPACE-AGE STYLING
FOR THE 'FIFTY FORD**

ODD 'N' ENDS

continued from p. 9

Occasionally, due to mishap, brake fluid becomes spilled upon brake linings. To assure thorough cleaning they may be placed in a container and boiled for several minutes in a strong solution of baking soda.

On hardtops, when the owner decides to carry lumber, etc. on the roof, it is often a problem as to how to protect the finish when a patent rack is not immediately available. Old blankets are not particularly satisfactory since they tend to slip on the glossy surface and, too, whip badly in the wind. A cheap and effective way to overcome the difficulty can be accomplished by lashing on one or two cast off inner tubes, properly inflated.

On accelerator pump installation in carburetor repairs, it is easy to damage the packing by cutting or wrinkling as the piston is forced into the cylinder. To avoid this trouble, salvage the pump cylinder from a junked carb and using this as a guide, pull the piston in "backward." Then set piston and cylinder over the job in question, line it up, and shove it on into place, easily.

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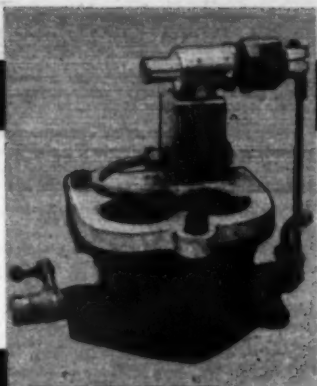
INJECTORS

as reviewed in January issue
of Rod & Custom magazine

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Dyno proves 35hp increase over stock carburetion on test '57 Ford.

25% deposit required on c.o.d.s. **\$24⁹⁵** ea.



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RUFFLED FEATHERS

continued from p. 45

This month, the modifications to the hood scoop, headlight rims and front fender lines are shown and explained. Readers Bob Wilson, Billy Cross, Bob Bilbrey, Hadley Stacey, Dexter Serre, Chuck Tingle, Harold Hamrick, Sam Cipriano, and Don Ruder were responsible for the scoop change, their ideas being collectively to extend it, remove the chrome grille and increase the size

of the opening. The use of a round light rim without a peaked shade was decided upon following suggestions by readers Gary Sherril, William Renner, Bill Skiba, Ned McElroy and Ronnie Colwell. A number of these fellows submitted sketches to back up their written ideas.

Be with us next trip for nose news.

(Nose news is good news.) ●

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FEBRUARY, 1958

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Show Time Once Again

Calling all Rod and Custom fans — the shows of 1958 are all set to get underway. Below is only a partial list of the upcoming events the next few months. Check your local papers for shows near you and to see if the Rod & Custom Magazine Dream Truck will be calling on your own home town.

JANUARY 24th, 25th and 26th. Holding forth for the 6th straight year will be the San Jose Autorama Auto Show in San Jose, Calif.

JANUARY 31st, FEB. 1st and 2nd. Three straight days of top-notch machinery can be seen at the San Mateo, Calif., Rod and Custom show.

FEBRUARY 7th, 8th and 9th. One of the oldest car shows going is the big Sacramento (Calif.) Autorama conducted by well-known Harold Bagdasarian, coming up for its 8th year. Possible participants are invited to contact Harold at 1812 "L" Street in Sacramento, California.

FEBRUARY 19th through the 23rd. Two giant car displays hold forth during these dates, but they're separated by a good 3,000 — select the one closest you and don't miss it. The Oakland Roadster show, a California

favorite for seven years, and the Hartford (Conn.) Autorama, popular for eight years. R & C promises spectators their money's worth at both.

FEBRUARY 14th and 15th. A club-sponsored show opens its doors for the first time in Lansing, Michigan, as that city's Conquerors put on exhibition most of the Mid-west's better Rods and Customs.

FEBRUARY 28th, MARCH 1st and 2nd. The Slowpokes 'way out in Monterey, Calif., will open the doors of their Kustom Kar Kapades in a show rivalling even the long-established displays.

MARCH 7th, 8th and 9th. Fresno, Calif., will be the scene of the last Mid-California show for a couple of months. So if you missed all the wonderful cars shown at the other Calif. shows, you can catch them all here.

MARCH 19th through 23rd. The 2nd Annual Rod and Custom Show for California's Napa Valley will be held at the fairgrounds. Space is being provided for over 100 cars this year. Prospective participants are invited to contact Bob Fornasier at 354 1st St. in Napa, Calif.

A word to the wise: Patronize your local club car shows. It's good for the sport — thus it's good for you.

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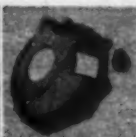


Followers of our recent series on the fine Fords for 1940 (R & C for Dec. '57) will recall the nifty li'l ½-tonner shown here again. Someone wrongly informed us regarding the pickup's background, so we'll make amends by running through it once again. The ½-tonner is the pride and joy of Marty Moore who built up the truck without outside help. The owner, a resident of California's San Diego, owns and operates Marty's Custom Shop and the cleanly designed '40 is rolling proof of the shop's quality work. 'Nuff said?

CUSTOM

Go Kart ▶▶▶▶▶

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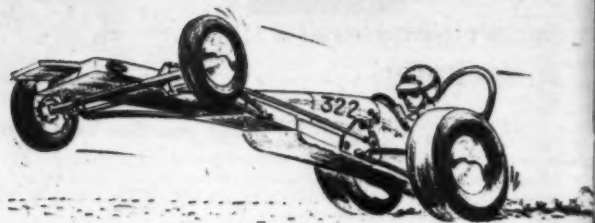
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YOU MAY NOT have noticed it, but the engine swapping business is dying on the vine. Commercial shops that specialize in swaps to order are doing less and less business along that line, and the backyard wrench wrestlers who like to do it themselves seem to be doing it a lot less than a year or two ago.

The brutal truth is that there is just no decisive margin of road performance to be had through this channel anymore — at least not without spending a fortune to hop up a big-inch engine once you get it swapped into a light chassis. The little 1955 Chevrolet V-8 is the fault of it all. Up until this car appeared on the scene the low-priced sedans wouldn't go. If a young fellow wanted a reasonably-inexpensive road car that had the punch to warp 99% of the other cars on the road, his only choice was to drop a big-inch V-8 in a light, low-priced chassis. Usually he didn't have to modify the engine to get the performance he needed. The high-priced cars with the 200-hp engines were too heavy to keep up, and the low-priced stuff didn't have any hp anyway.

Then came the '55 Chev with power pack. The little stinker weighed only 3300 lbs., and the 265-cu. in. engine would develop as much *actual horsepower* at 5500 rpm as many big V-8's of 50 or 80 cu. in. more displacement. Let's face it! The '55 Chevy packs (especially with Corvette cam) performed as well — or better — than the average big-inch swap job at that time. So what happened? The performance enthusiasts began forgetting their swaps and started to buy Chevys by the thousands. A young fellow with a steady job could buy a brand new Chevy with very little more financial strain than needed to install a late Buick, Cadillac, Olds, or Chrysler engine in a two or three-year-old car. (Remember, he had to buy the engine itself, adaptors, parts, etc.). And by early 1956 he could buy good used power pack models for little over \$1000 that could still do 0-60 mph in less than 15 seconds.

That was the beginning of the end for the swap business. Actually, where can you turn anymore for a really decisive performance margin? We can't all ride around in 2500-lb. coupes and roadsters. The low-priced engines now have almost as much horsepower and cubic inches as the \$5000 cars, so there's little future in swapping. We can't all afford Corvettes and T'Birds. It's getting tougher and tougher to improve factory performance with hot cams, multiple carbs, etc.

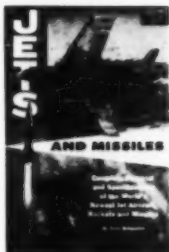
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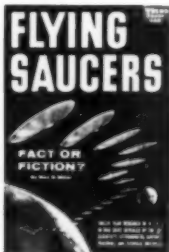
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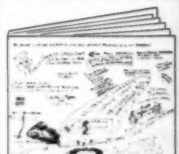


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